

REMARKS

Claims 1, 6, 8, 10-12, 15 and 17 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 6, 8, 12, 15, and 17 are amended, and claims 2-5, 7, 9, 13, 14, 16, 18, and 19 are cancelled. In particular, Applicant makes the following changes:

- 1) incorporate the allowable features of claim 3 into claim 1;
- 2) incorporate the allowable features of claim 7 into claim 6;
- 3) incorporate the allowable features of claim 14 and intervening claim 13 into claim 8;
- 4) incorporate the allowable features of claim 16 into claim 15;
- 5) amend allowable claim 17 into independent form to include the features of claim 1 and intervening claim 2; and
- 6) incorporate the allowable features of claim 19 and intervening claim 18 into claim 12.

All of the claims should thus be in condition for allowance.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 because the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration; (c) do not present any additional claims; and (d) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

Applicant appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 3, 7, 14, 16, 17 and 19. As discussed above, each independent claim recites allowable features.

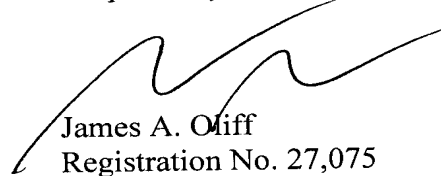
The rejections of claims 3, 5, 7 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8, 9, 11-13 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over JP-A-2003-252448 to Kusano, in view of U.S. 724,859 to Harding, DE 20309047 (see U.S. 2006/0243693 to Weis et al. (Weis)) and U.S. 5,910,973 to Grodzins, and claims 10 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

over Kusano in view of Harding, Weis, Grodzins and JP-A-09-156769 to Okubo, have been rendered moot by the incorporation of allowable features into the independent claims as discussed above.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: April 22, 2010

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